

VZCZCXRO4233
OO RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC
DE RUEHBJ #5707/01 2420939
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 300939Z AUG 07
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1370
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHMFISS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BEIJING 005707

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/01/2032
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [CH](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: CHINA NUCLEAR FORCE COMMANDER REITERATES "NO FIRST
USE" POLICY TO CODEL SKELTON

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Clark T. Randt, Jr.
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

¶1. (C) China's strategic nuclear and conventional missile force commander General Jing Zhiyuan told CODEL Skelton August 27 that China's "no first use" policy remains unchanged and will "never change." He stressed that China's strategic missile force is solely for self defense. On force modernization, Gen. Jing said that since China is a developing country, its nuclear force development is limited as well. Regarding Taiwan, he said China will never tolerate Taiwan independence. However, he underscored that the deployment of missiles on China's southeastern coast does not necessarily imply that China will use them. On nuclear safety, Gen. Jing said an unauthorized or accidental launch of nuclear weapons is "definitely impossible". End Summary.

¶2. (U) A delegation led by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton (D-MO) and including Representatives Randy Forbes (R-VA), John Spratt (R-SC), Robin Hayes (R-NC), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH), Delegate Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU) and Rear Admiral Mark Ferguson, met with Second Artillery commander General Jing Zhiyuan August 27. It was the first CODEL to visit the Second Artillery.

China's Nuclear Policy: No First Use

¶3. (C) Gen. Jing reiterated the importance of developing state-to-state and military-to-military common ground, mutual understanding, friendship and trust. He said that China and the United States are both stakeholders and constructive partners. In order to "promote strategic trust," Jing provided his perspective on nuclear policy and strategy. He underscored that China has a "no first use" policy on nuclear weapons. This policy remains unchanged and will "never change." China is a "peace loving" nation which conducts an independent foreign policy of peace and carries out initiatives to establish a "harmonious world," Jing said. The purpose of China's nuclear weapons is self defense. "Atomic bombs cannot solve the problems of war," he continued. There would be no winners, only huge losses. We do not want to suffer nuclear threat or attack and do not want other countries to suffer, Jing added.

¶4. (C) Although China's nuclear capability is limited, it has "protective capability, survivability and counter-attack capability," the General said. China has had nuclear weapons for years, and its national security has been threatened on

occasion, but its "no first use" policy has not changed. One should "watch words and deeds" when measuring the policy of a country, Jing stressed. He highlighted China's participation in international nuclear regulatory frameworks, including the nonproliferation treaty, cessation of nuclear testing, nuclear test ban treaty, multiple bilateral "no first use" agreements, among others.

China's Nuclear Deterrent and Military Modernization

15. (C) Congresswoman Bordallo (D-GU) asked why China is manufacturing nuclear weapons in large numbers. Jing replied that the danger of nuclear weapons lies in the hands of those who control them, not in the weapons themselves. He repeated that the strategic missile force is solely for self defense, and he hopes that China will never use these weapons. On the development of China's strategic force, Jing emphasized the principle of small quantity, high quality weapons as well as superiority, performance, effectiveness and reliability. China does not seek quality without superiority. If an enemy tries to destroy China, China will retaliate, he stated. China maintains a nuclear deterrent at the minimum level necessary for self defense.

16. (C) Chairman Skelton said both countries are working to modernize their militaries, and "you are undoubtedly working to modernize the Second Artillery." Congressman Forbes (R-VA) asked the General how modernization is affecting priorities and "what you do." China is a developing country, and its nuclear force development is limited as well, said Jing. China's 2006 Defense White Paper noted that its military budget is only 10 percent of the U.S. defense

BEIJING 00005707 002 OF 003

budget. Improving equipment is part of the budget, and the improvement of the Second Artillery's equipment is an even smaller percentage of the budget.

Taiwan

17. (C) Congressman Flake (R-AZ) said one source of apprehension for the United States has been the hundreds of missiles pointed toward Taiwan. He noted the apparent inconsistency with the defensive posture of the Chinese military. Gen. Jing replied that China deploys conventional missiles on the southeast coast because Taiwan is an integral and inseparable part of China, and Taiwan's status is an internal affair at core of the nation's interests. Taiwan independence and separatist activities are the root cause of instability and are the biggest threat to cross-Strait peace, he said. China will never tolerate Taiwan's separation from China by any means, at any time or under any circumstances. The deployment of these conventional missiles is not targeted at "our Taiwan compatriots" or other countries and is not a threat to other countries. These missiles target independence forces, he stressed. Just like the deployment of nuclear weapons, the deployment of conventional missiles in a region does not necessarily imply that China will use them. Jing stated China will do everything it can for the peace and stability of cross-Strait relations and the motherland.

Nuclear Safety and Security

18. (C) Congressman Spratt (R-SC) thanked Gen. Jing for the informative presentation on China's nuclear doctrine and asked about security and safeguards of nuclear systems. In particular, the DF-11 and DF-15 missiles are road mobile and rail mobile, therefore susceptible to sabotage. Jing said China is a responsible country that attaches a high importance to preventing unauthorized access to nuclear weapons. The management and control of nuclear weapons is reliable and safe. Unauthorized or accidental launch is

"definitely impossible," the General continued. He explained that China stores nuclear weapons according to strict operational and tactical criteria and has reliable tactical means and monitoring to ensure safety. He cited a personal example, stating that even as the Second Artillery commander, he has to apply for access to launch facilities and be escorted by his staff. In addition, the command authority is highly centralized and under the direct control of the Central Military Commission (CMC). The Second Artillery follows the orders of the CMC in a "strict and accurate" way.

It acts as an organ to execute orders from the CMC, and orders are jointly signed by the Commanding General, Political Commissar (i.e., Communist Party representative) and Chief of Staff.

¶9. (C) When Chairman Skelton asked what worries Gen. Jing most about what might go wrong, the General said that superiors trust their subordinates and are fully confident in them. Jing asked rhetorically how China could ensure absolute safety if not fully confident in its rank and file, and said he would not be a fully competent commander if he did not have full confidence in his junior officers.

Military-to-Military Exchanges, Officer Training -----

¶10. (C) Chairman Skelton said he supports military-to-military exchanges, not just at the level of generals and admirals, and hopes that in a few years younger officers might participate in military exchanges as well. While the Second Artillery differs from the structure of U.S. forces and does not have an exact counterpart, the Second Artillery should initiate a dialogue with U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) in the near future. Jing said he thought such a visit would be conducive to the enhancement of strategic trust.

¶11. (C) Gen. Jing said that most officers are recruited from bachelors' degree programs, and Second Artillery relies on on-the-job training after entry. In this area, he highlighted experience from other militaries, including that of the United States. Before promotion, officers must do additional study in military academies or colleges.

BEIJING 00005707 003 OF 003

Overview of the Second Artillery -----

¶12. (C) Gen. Jing's Director General of Operations, Senior Colonel Li Longhu, gave a slide presentation on the organization and structure of the Second Artillery. At the top of the Second Artillery hierarchy are the Commander and Political Commissar, who is the Communist Party representative. Just below are the deputy commanders, deputy commissars and the Chief of Staff. Their staff consists of four first-order departments: headquarters, political, armaments and logistics. The logistics department supports operations, training and "order placement." The political department oversees personnel, ideological work and Communist affairs. The armaments department covers procurement, research and development, and management and maintenance of weapons. The Second Artillery as a whole is divided into three parts based on missions: nuclear missiles, conventional missiles and support units.

¶13. (C) The Second Artillery controls missile bases, training bases, academies, scientific research centers and supporting units, Col. Li continued. On the job training occurs in three ways. First, specialized training is done at the basic unit level. Second, combined training is coordinated with all elements, performed at the team level and then at the brigade level. Finally, operational exercises include missile brigades, units in combat scenarios and command and control. Second Artillery officer personnel typically graduate from civilian undergraduate and postgraduate

institutions and then join operational units. During their careers, officers receive on-the-job and rotational training and may attend intermediate and senior command colleges. To reach the division or regimental level, officers must complete professional military education (PME). Noncommissioned officers (NCOs) receive appointments after training at an academy or specialized institution.

¶14. (C) Weaponry in the Second Artillery is developed "independently or on the basis of self reliance." The command has "well supported" nuclear and conventional weapons of various ranges. Nuclear weapons include the DF-3, DF-4, DF-5, DF-21 and DF-31 missiles on mobile platforms or silos. On the conventional side, the DF-11 and DF-15 are on mobile platforms. The command follows the "revolution in military affairs" and emphasizes high quality, safety and limited scale.

Deepening Trust

¶15. (C) Chairman Skelton thanked Gen. Jing for the opportunity to visit with him. He expressed appreciation for Jing's "candor" and comments on "no first use" and nonproliferation, especially in light of threats posed by North Korea, Iran and rogue groups. Jing replied that he appreciated the frank atmosphere and expressed confidence that the discussion was a "sign of deepening trust." He noted that the delegation was the second foreign group to visit the Second Artillery. The first was former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's in 2005. As the delegation was leaving

SIPDIS

the meeting hall, the General said, "let us join hand in hand to maintain world peace together."

¶16. (U) The delegation cleared this cable.
Randt